

He Didn't Like Garrison

By JOHN A. BARBOUR

WASHINGTON (AP) — J. Edgar Hoover, the late FBI director, developed an abiding distaste for New Orleans District Attorney James Garrison and his attempts to prove that President John F. Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy.

FBI memos, released Wednesday, contained scrawled references to Garrison in Hoover's handwriting characterizing the controversial prosecutor as an "ego-maniac" and a "shyster." Garrison's investigation focused on the theory that Lee Harvey Oswald conspired with New Orleans sex deviates to kill Kennedy. There is no indication in the files that the FBI conducted an active investigation into Garrison's activities. It did, however, meticulously record volumes of derogatory data volunteered by informants, all of whose names were censored from the memos.

On one memo Hoover wrote: "More and more it becomes evident we should stay as far away as we can from this shyster."

In another he said, "I want no injection of the FBI into this farce. Already it is back-firing on Garrison and any action of ours can be twisted by this ego-maniac."

In still another, Hoover wrote: "I again stress I want no statements, whether on or off the record, made about the Garrison fiasco."

C. D. De Loach, a top FBI official, noted in a memo that then-U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark had relayed the fears of Rep. Hale Boggs, D-La., a member of the Warren Commission, that Garrison's al-



JIM GARRISON
A "shyster," in Hoover's words.

legations "might in some manner falsely involve the President (Johnson)." Clark said he hoped "the FBI was on top of this situation."

De Loach informed Clark that Hoover "had already instructed us to closely follow this matter." He also noted that Garrison "apparently desired to run for lieutenant governor and was attempting to engender as much publicity as possible for himself."

Hoover, in another memo the same month, February 1967, said, "See that our New Orleans office meticulously stays on top of this

fiasco. It smells."

FBI informants were even more condemnatory of Garrison and his actions. He was characterized as a psychopath, supported by a wealthy New Orleans car dealer. They alleged that he had bought an expensive home and had spent \$25,000 on furniture, despite the fact that he had entered public office "destitute."

Hoover waved away requests that the FBI enter the New Orleans investigation with the statement that it was outside of FBI jurisdiction and a matter for the state.

In orders to his special agents in charge, Hoover wrote in March 1967 regarding Garrison's investigation:

"All offices should continue to accept any information regarding the assassination; however, no investigation is to be conducted without bureau approval irrespective of the nature of the data furnished."

"Should pertinent information be received, which by necessity requires immediate investigation or other action, the bureau is to be notified either by telephone or teletype, depending upon the urgency of the situation."

Also in 1967, the FBI summarized all of the information it had on Garrison, omitting informants' names. It was two pages long and alleged connections with prostitutes and hoodlums.

It also noted: "He (Garrison) served as a special agent of the FBI from March 5, 1951, resigning on July 24, 1951, to enter military service. His services were considered satisfactory."